



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRY

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For Release: January 20, 2005
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Virginia Reports Workplace Injury and Illness Rates for 2003

RICHMOND - The Virginia Department of Labor and Industry reported the overall nonfatal occupational injury and illness rate for Virginia in 2003 at 4.3 cases per 100 full-time equivalent workers. A total of 116,300 injuries and illnesses were recorded in private and state and local government industries. The private industry rate was 4.0; the state and local government incidence rate was 6.2.

Occupational injury and illness information is reported by Virginia in tables of both numbers and rates. Rates for injury and illness incidents are expressed in terms of cases per 100 full-time equivalent workers. The total estimated number of nonfatal injuries and illnesses in Virginia's private industry workplaces was 92,900 in 2003. The 2003 incidence rates varied by publishable private industry sectors, ranging from 6.1 in transportation and warehousing to .7 in finance and insurance. This was the 33rd annual survey of job-related injuries and illnesses conducted by the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor.

Because Virginia is one of 25 jurisdictions with a federally approved OSHA state plan, Virginia's state and local governments are surveyed along with private establishments. Additional information and more detailed tables of these results are available from the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry's Office of VOSH Research and Analysis.

Note on industry classifications: Beginning with the 2003 reference year, the Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses began using the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Prior to 2003, the survey used the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system. The substantial differences between these systems result in breaks in series for industry data. Users are advised against making comparisons between the 2003 industry categories and the results from previous years.

Highlights of the 2003 Survey

Of the nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses occurring in private industry, 49,100 were cases that resulted in days away from work, job transfer, or restriction. The remainder of these private industry cases (43,800) consisted of injuries or illnesses that did not result in days lost from work, job transfer, or restriction, but which are considered otherwise recordable.

Other findings from the 2003 Annual Survey include:

- Approximately 27,800 injuries and illnesses in private industry and 6,000 in state and local government were serious enough to require recuperation away from work.
- Injury and illness incidence rates for the NAICS sub-sectors in manufacturing ranged from a high of 12.7 cases per 100 full-time equivalent employees in leather and allied product manufacturing to a low of 2.1 in paper manufacturing and electrical equipment, appliance, and component manufacturing.
- For the sub-sectors in construction, the highest rate was reported in heavy and civil engineering construction (6.6), while the lowest rate was in construction of buildings (3.9).
- For the sub-sectors in retail trade, where more detail is now available for data users, food and beverage stores reported the highest rate (8.4), and clothing and clothing accessories stores reported the lowest rate (2.0).
- For the sub-sectors in health care and social assistance, nursing and residential care facilities reported the highest rate (11.9), while ambulatory health care services reported the lowest rate (1.9).
- The state and local government overall injury and illness rate (6.2) exceeds that of private industry (4.0) in Virginia.

Occupational Fatalities

Fatality data for 2003, which includes all work-related fatalities in Virginia, were also collected in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics through the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) program and were released separately in October 2003. Data from 1992 through 2003 are currently available from the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry's Office of VOSH Research and Analysis. Some basic tables are also available on the agency's web site at www.doli.virginia.gov - [Research and Analysis](#).

Background of the Annual Survey

The Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses is a Federal/State cooperative program in which employer reports are collected from about 200,000 individual private industry establishments nationally and processed by State agencies. The Mine Safety and Health Administration and the Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration provided occupational injury and illness data for coal, metal and nonmetal mining and for railroad activities. The Survey excludes the self-employed, farms with fewer than 11 employees, private households and employees in federal government agencies or installations.

The Survey measures the number of new work-related illness cases that are reported during the year, although some conditions are often difficult to attribute to workplace conditions and are not adequately recognized and reported. Such long-term latent illnesses are considered understated in the Survey's illness measures. On the other hand, most reported new illnesses are those that are easier to relate to workplace activity (for example, contact dermatitis or carpal tunnel syndrome).